A TIME FOR HEALING

Prison chaplain works for restorative justice and creates sacred space for survivors

BY BROTHER DENNIS L. GIBBS, CDL

February 23, 2020

The three deputies escort George into the day room in chains – hands shackled to the chain around his waist. George is classified as a high-security inmate and only allowed movement outside of his cell under heavy guard. I have known George for the past nine years since his arrival at L.A. County Jail. I know his story, and it is one of the most heartbreaking of all that I have heard in my sixteen years of jail ministry. I also have had the privilege and honor to witness George’s transformation brought about by reconciling his past through self-examination, repentance and the giving and receiving of forgiveness. He has truly been reborn. And now we have arrived at this moment, the day of his baptism.

As we move through the beautiful Episcopal Baptismal liturgy, with the makeshift altar adorned with white and gold vestments, silver and gold vessels, pure, clear holy water, and George standing with such grace and beauty at the heart of it all, it is obvious that the deputies standing by are drawn in by the sacredness of the moment. What just a few moments before may have seemed like a routine special handling assignment has now become a moment of grace. This is God’s special handling of a tender and beautiful soul. As the holy water pours over George’s head, everyone seems captured in holiness, all of this being held at its center by George’s glowing and peaceful presence.

Then it’s time for Holy Communion. In a rare show of solidarity and grace, the deputies share the Real Presence of Christ with us. In this moment there is no Jew nor Greek, no slave nor free. We are all free – to love. I sense that this is the community that Jesus has in mind for us. A community where the seemingly least among us is the one that holds the center and leads us into truth. Like the day of The Presentation so long ago in the Temple with the infant Jesus, Simeon, and the prophet Anna, the light of revelation is before us for all to see. I am thinking of the words hovering over Jesus’ own baptism – “This is my son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Thank you George. I am grateful that you answered God’s call to salvation. The Episcopal Church welcomes you and we are a better community because of your presence.

Our life in community with our friends in the southern California jails and prisons is rich with such moments and it’s an honor to walk with our incarcerated friends who have so much to teach us. Our sisters and brothers caught up in the cycle of incarceration have been knocked around by life. Most, if not all, were first victims themselves but lacked the resources and opportunities to heal from their trauma. Therefore, it is not surprising that the cycle of violence would continue from one generation to the next. Many people in such environments are never taught proper life skills to cope with adversity and challenge; instead, they learn to strike out and become the aggressor. Many grow up in shame. Many grow up without fathers. Others are shown unhealthy models by parents who themselves were caught up in the destructive cycle of violence and trauma.

But there are others for whom God weeps. There are the victims of crime. Just as we sit with offenders and help them strive towards accountability and reconciliation, so too must we help those whose lives have been affected by acts of violence, to help foster healing from the wounds so unfairly inflicted upon them. This is the work of restorative justice.

Continued on page 4
From AED’s Vice President

At the time this Diakoneo was in layout, President Douglas Argue was working tirelessly on the COVID-19 response for Ohio’s unsheltered and homeless population. In lieu of his usual article, we welcome a reflection from AED’s Vice President, Tracie Middleton.

In dramatic shifts, keep watch

BY DEACON TRACIE MIDDLETON

As I’m writing, it’s mid-March, and I’ve just emerged from quarantine - into a very different reality than two weeks ago. My guess is that as you’re reading this, it’s still a pretty different reality, although you may be able to get toilet paper by now. But I wonder what all will change from this in the longer term.

A member of the folk band at my church shared an article, whose authors suggest some metaphors for framing this crisis: a blizzard, a long winter, or a short ice age. They argue that this is not a blizzard, where we just wait it out for a couple of weeks and then go back to normal; it may not even be like a long winter. Instead, it may be more like a brief ice age, where all over the world, things shift fairly dramatically for at least a few years.

I feel overwhelmed at times, and I don’t know what I’m supposed to be doing or being right now. I’m in the dark, but Barbara Brown Taylor says, “being in the dark is not the same as being in danger,” and I think we can help each other move through this. It may involve reckoning with grief, fear, and maybe even despair. Don’t numb or avoid these. Sit with them, and sit with others who are in them, and don’t try to hurry. Our tradition has a lot to say about transformation that can arise from suffering. It’s kind of a central point in the Gospel. We can’t make resurrection happen, but we can “keep watch… with those who work, or watch, or weep this night…”

I’m also thinking of the Easter Vigil: how it starts at night, almost as though the Church is in danger, “with those who work, or watch, or weep this night…”

This is the night. Keep watch.

Join AED’s Board - Election this fall

We invite passionate, enthusiastic individuals who desire to offer their gifts and leadership skills for Engaging the Diakonia of All Believers.

See pages 8–9 for details.

COVID-19 RESPONSE & RESOURCES

Submit your news, articles and photos

This issue of Diakoneo went to print in early April, at the height of the coronavirus pandemic. In this challenging time, we’re aware that deacons are adapting current ministries, and beginning new ones, in response to the crisis.

We’d like to share those stories from deacons and those in formation. We’d like to share those stories from deacons and those in formation. Submissions of any length are welcome, though 200-1,000 words are standard. Photos are also gladly received, with proper permissions.

To submit an article or resources, contact Deacon Anne at communications@episcopaldeacons.org.
Rooted in Jesus
EXCITING, ECLECTIC & FESTIVE
BY DEACON LORI MILLS-CURRAN

In January, I had the incredible good fortune to be present at the first Rooted in Jesus Conference in Atlanta. In my diocese (MA), there is a significant diminution of resources for ministry of all kinds. There is constant worry about how The Episcopal Church (TEC) is being negatively affected by this trend. As we all know, there is no Christendom anymore. The social structures that supported TEC’s work and position in the US have changed, and it’s my understanding that it’s the same in Canada.

So Rooted in Jesus was an incredible experience. The Episcopal Church Foundation, which I only thought of as a source of information about stewardship campaigns and how to manage an endowment, has recently expanded its offerings. They sponsored Rooted in Jesus, along with Forma, the professional Christian educators’ group. It took the bull by the horns in planning for a new church future, and was one of the most stimulating conferences I ever experienced.

The best thing about the conference was that it was not confined in scope to interest only a certain group of church workers. An eclectic mix of resources were there, and we had an in-depth presentation of offerings from every area of interest in the church, including how to enter into imaginative new partnerships with your neighbors in a way that fostered Christian mission and didn’t just bring in the rent. Dwight Zschiele was one of the primary presenters. He is doing more to open the minds of Episcopalians to our new evangelism environment than any other researcher. We face an entirely new circumstance in our churches, compared to the role churches have played in our culture. And at Rooted in Jesus, we were presented with many entirely new tools.

The festive conclusion of this event was a Eucharist at the Atlanta cathedral, and one of the most meaningful worship experiences I have ever had in the Episcopal Church. Deacon Letty Guevara-Cuence was the featured gospeller.

I’m excited. I met people who had been ordained deacon within the past few months, and people who have been ordained for many, many years. We were all impressed with the camaraderie, the beauty, the positive energy. Deacons had high visibility, including one of the Atlanta archdeacons, Juan Sandoval, who helped coordinate the Spanish-language offerings. I felt like I met all the people with whom I want to spend the next five years in ministry. My next steps? Figure out how to partner with all the cool people I met at Rooted in Jesus, in order to foster diakonia as the work of the whole people of God, in our church today.
We have begun expanding our work into the state prison system and with families through our new partnership with Healing Dialogue and Action – an organization led by my long-time friend Javier Stauring. The work involves facilitating Victim Awareness Classes for prison inmates convicted of violent offences – mostly homicide; working with families of both offenders and victims; and also the careful and vital work of bringing together people from all sides for dialogue that can foster healing and restoration.

It’s a Saturday afternoon and we are preparing for a gathering of women – both mothers and grandmothers – who have lost a child due to street violence, mostly from gun violence. As we are setting up the space at the Community of Divine Love monastery where I live, I am told to expect ten women in addition to the four of us hosting and facilitating this day of healing. As more and more women begin to arrive, it becomes clear that there will be significantly more than ten. As we begin, we have twenty-one people sitting in the sacred circle.

The day begins as each woman tells her story of loss, of love, of heartbreak. The stories – being told mostly in Spanish – are tragic. The sobs come from a place deep within these beautiful souls. The tears are falling as each woman tells of how their worst fear came to reality in the death of their beloved children. I am humbled by the pain and struggle of these women and the grace in how they live in it.

It feels as though my compassion for them can never really touch the depth of their grief and suffering. I also know that the women’s tears flooding the room are also God’s tears mingling with our own. God is in solidarity, weeping with us and for our lives.

The day continues with a deep space of guided meditation we call The Compassionate Friend. Things begin to open and soften as the grace of healing begins to permeate like a balm to the soul. Now it’s time for art projects like beading and collage – each creation has its own story that is shared and held by hearts of love. Soon, it’s time to conclude this day of friendship and healing. We go around the room and say just one word that represents the day’s experience. The words slowly and quietly come – words like “grace” … “love” … “respect” … “truth” … “peace” and “joy.” Yes, joy. All of these words are floating in the same room that a just few hours before was flooded with tears. The courage and grace of these amazing women survivors has transformed this into sacred space, into holy ground.

What I know in my heart to be true is brought to life by George, Magdalena, Irma, Rosa and all the others: That no matter who we are, where we have been, what we have done – or had done to us, no one is beyond the grace and love of God.

**THE CIRCLE, THE FIRE, THE STORY**

We gather the circle
The elders and the young
The women and the men
We sit in the round
Facing one another
So that we can see truth.

We light the sacred fire
Warming ourselves
Our gaze fixed on the steady glow
In the center of our being
Together we are held
Illumined by the flame of love.

We share our story
In this safe and sacred space
Honoring each heart with our own
We speak and we are free
We listen and we are love
Breaking our silence we are healed.

We gather the circle
We light the fire
We tell our story.

Dennis Gibbs is a monk and founding member of Community of Divine Love, an Episcopal religious community of men and women in San Gabriel, California. He is a prison chaplain and founder/director of Prism Restorative Justice, a ministry of the Diocese of Los Angeles, at work in the L.A. County Jails and California state prisons engaged in spiritual care with the incarcerated and advocating for criminal justice reform. He is a deacon and associate clergy for spiritual formation at The Church of Our Saviour in San Gabriel. He’s also a spiritual director, retreat leader, public speaker and writer. His book, Oblivion – Grace in Exile with a Monk Behind Bars, is available on Amazon.
AED’S DEACON COMPETENCIES:
The Diocese of Texas incorporates Competencies into curriculum

BY DEACON MARY LENN DIXON

The diaconate came to the Diocese of Texas relatively late. Although we had had a couple of deacons who had been ordained elsewhere, our first eight locally-formed deacons were ordained in February, 2007. Several of them were quickly recruited to oversee deacon fieldwork and/or to serve on the Committee for the Diaconate, delegated as an organ of our Commission on Ministry for deacon discernment. They attended AED’s 2007 Triennial and were influenced by discussions of competency-based formation, which accorded well with the experience some of them had in adult education.

Thus, by the time I entered the Iona School for Ministry (Diocese of Texas) in 2008, what I later recognized as AED Competencies work was already in place. We did competency-informed fieldwork (non-parochial in our middler year, parochial as seniors). We had assignments for local needs assessments, local ministry inventories, and a Synthesis Paper that included Frequently Asked Questions and Elevator Speech descriptions of diaconal ministry. Along with the priest-track students, we also did assignments on the Contemporary Episcopal Church, which required us to research policy papers and General Convention statements on current justice issues, and we officiated and preached at Daily Office services when our school gathered.

We have continued to incorporate statements from work done by AED into new class development, course objectives, and tweaks to our fieldwork process. Various of us have continued to benefit from AED’s work by attending Triennials and/or A3D Conferences. In the summer of 2018, I attended the Iona Collaborative Consultation as an observer/participant and got a copy of the competencies prepared by Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC). Since then, my co-dean, the Rev. Mark Crawford (dean for Priest Formation; I am dean for Diocesan and Lay Formation) and I have been working with TEAC and AED Competencies in formulating goals and objectives for our students and for our instructors to use in classes. In 2018-19, we focused on incorporating them into our “advising” system with students.

In the 2019 Iona Collaborative Consultation, our new suffragan bishop with oversight of our school, the Rt. Rev. Kai Ryan, joined Mark and me. We formally joined the Collaborative, and we began to formalize goals for incorporating competencies into our whole curriculum-planning process. This year, Bishop Ryan arranged for us to use two consultants with expertise in adult education in developing grids of competencies/objectives/class applications, as well as pedagogical coaching to incorporate them. We have begun with some “pilot” classes to beta-test the new grids and some pedagogical methods. We are also working on how to conduct competency-based student assessments in place of at least some of our traditional grading process.

While this is definitely a work in progress, I would be glad to share some sample grids and to receive feedback on how we might better incorporate both AED and TEAC competency statements into our work. We are energized by the work both AED and the Iona Collaborative have done and appreciate the ways these guide our own work now.

Mary Lenn Dixon is the Dean for Diocesan and Lay Formation at the Diocese of Texas Iona School for Ministry. She serves at SoCo Episcopal Community in Austin. She can be reached at marylenn@dixon@gmail.com.
Heartbreaking images and stories from the border flood the media, along with vitriol toward immigrants. How can congregations help, even if they are located far from the border? This new toolkit offered by Episcopal Migration Ministries helps congregations discern and implement ministries of accompaniment with asylum seekers. (Asylum seekers are refugees forced to leave their home under duress, without processed paperwork and approval, who need sponsors to accompany them through the long journey to freedom in the United States.)

“Introduction to Supporting Asylum Seekers: A Toolkit for Congregations” offers best practices, ministry models, checklists, and other guidance for sponsoring asylum seekers at any stage of the journey, compiled by Episcopalians from across the country. Deacon Leeann Culbreath of the Diocese of Georgia served on the toolkit team. To receive a download of the toolkit and/or to view a webinar that walks through the toolkit contents, visit episcopalmigrationministries.org/asylum-toolkit/.

Walking in welcome: Migration, hope, and hospitality

Archdeacon Roger Saterstrom serves outreach ministries at Christ Church Cathedral in Nashville, the Diocese of Tennessee. Roger is a great friend and supporter of Episcopal Migration Ministries. He and his wife Anna assist asylum seekers transiting through the Nashville Greyhound bus station. rsaterstrom@christcathedral.org.
Discernment Continues
REFLECTING ON LEADERSHIP, BOUNDARIES AND HIS “YES” IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS AS A DEACON

BY DEACON PAUL APARICIO

March 2, 2020

It's been two years since my ordination but of course this journey started well before that date. One of many moments of significance was diving into the word “discernment” as a member of a Vestry. I don't know about you, but I am destined to never escape the necessity of its application. These last two years are evident of that reality.

Ordination, like a wedding, comes and goes. A lot of preparation goes into the event with a climax in the ceremony and celebration that follows. Once it is over there is somewhat of a back to business as usual. I was assigned back to the parish that raised me up and looked forward to engaging in ministry leadership. What threw me for a loop though were the discerning questions that kept creeping into my life as a new deacon. I came to ask myself, “Would the parish expect me to be a new version of past deacons?” “Will the parish effectively see me as a deacon or just regular old Paul?” These questions weren't only with the congregation in mind but also the clergy I would be leading with. Discernment was needed on this front.

Ordination brings an announcement of commitment. What about the commitments that were announced prior? Do commitments like marriage, fatherhood, and others require a renouncement of sorts? I think the obvious answer here is “no” but is it realized by myself or by those I serve? A life with multiple commitments needs balance to ensure each pillar is well supported. As seasons change, the commitments change. Without support, subterranean abuse can come. This is easier said than done especially if you are the only one presenting the case in a relationship. I have the privilege to work with a transformational ministry that has a class called Boundaries. Much of the lessons are focused on when to say “yes” and when to say “no” in a relationship and I have found great parallels with clergy life. I get the sense that we enter this ordination track with a consistent “yes!” as in “Here I am; send me!” As deacons we are willing to jump in and help build up the body of Christ whenever and wherever. Yet a “yes” to God may not always look like a “yes.” I am finding more and more often that a holy “yes” can look like a “no” to the outside looking in. This type of “no” needs a lot of communication for transparency. Discernment is intertwined with this balance.

Not all parishes are alike, and neither are all dioceses. In Fond du Lac, we are still in the infant resurgence of diaconal ordaining after some years of dormancy. I yearn for more growth in the diocesan diaconal community. Without that, it can feel like an island with no boat in sight. AED has been a blessing in this regard. I have met other deacons and begun to see how they live in their dioceses. At times I find relief that others have the same frustrations and find envy in how much more mature other communities are. No matter if your diocese has a thriving community or not, I believe persistence in seeking it out is key. That’s what I love about AED. The door is not only open but there's someone at the door ready to shake your hand, show you around, and respond to questions or requests. When I found myself on that island, AED was there to connect me with a mentor and connect me with the Center for Anglican Learning and Leadership (CALL) for continuing education. The association doesn't just wait for you but rather they reach out from time to time. I imagine if you are reading this then you have made your own connection. Are there deacons in your diocese though that have yet to make one? The act of you reaching out could be the vessel that docks at their lonely island. As we seek community, we also in turn must provide community. Discerning where you reside with this context could be transformative for you and other deacons.

I would say the cherry on top of these last two years is the roller-coaster of self-doubt that seems like the feeling of a bunny in the grips of a lion. I have often found myself wondering if I was good enough to lead the faithful into the world. Am I living into the vows I announced? Our faith is grounded in the reality that Christ is the bridge over the chasm of imperfection. Whenever the chasm seemed too deep and dark my prayer life has been fruitful. An active prayer life engaging with God each day, in regularity and in unexpectedness is the source of light each of us need. In prayer, I recognize that the transformative action of deacons is not by their will alone but by their willingness to be vessels of God’s will in the world. We are stained glass windows that only have purpose fulfilled when God’s light shines through and illuminates those willing to look towards Christ. My self-doubt is the result of my effort to be in the place of God and believe I am in charge. I continue to discern how to get out of the way and let God be God. My hope is that as I mature in this diakonial calling this roller-coaster will have less turbulence. The best days are when I find myself out in the world with people in the context of transformation. I see the Holy Spirit moving within a room and pause for a moment and give thanks. Discernment continues well after ordination in order to find the pulse of God’s presence in our lives and in the lives we serve. Discernment continues as we persist in faith that the diakonia of all believers is essential for a life in Christ.

Paul Aparicio was ordained on December 16, 2017 and serves at Grace Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Fond du Lac. He works as an Electrical Engineer at a machine manufacturer.
Join AED’s Board
BE PART OF STRENGTHENING THE DIACONATE!

The Association for Episcopal Deacons Board of Directors elects new members every two years. This year we have 5 (or 6) positions to fill. We invite passionate, enthusiastic individuals who desire to offer their gifts and leadership skills for Engaging the Diakonia of All Believers as a missional church in the 21st century to work with us.

Specific skill sets needed are: development, public policy/legislative advocacy (inside and/or outside the church institution), community organizing and experience with non-profits. We are also committed to increasing the geographic, ethnic, age, and gender diversity of our Board.

Please read the Board of Directors Responsibility and Covenants (next page) and complete the Nominee Profile. Both documents are also online at www.episcopaldeacons.org/2020-election.

AED Board of Directors Nominee Profile

This form is also available at www.episcopaldeacons.org. Go to About/Board/2020 Election.

Email your completed form and responses to Tracie Middleton at deacon.middleton@edfw.org.
All submissions must be received by June 1, 2020.

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: ____________________________________________________________________________________________

Position desired:  □ Deacon  □ Lay  □ Presbyter

If Deacon, office desired:  □ Board member  □ Vice-President/President-Elect

Home Address: __________________________________________ City __________________________ State _____ Zip ______

Phone: Home: _________________________ Cell: __________________________ Office: ___________________________________

Diocese of Canonical Residence: _____________________________________________________________ Email: ________________________________________

Present Employment: ___________________________________________________________________________________

Current Ministries: ____________________________________________________________________________________

Current Church Assignment: ____________________________________________________________________________

Previous Positions: ___________________________________________________________________________________

Educational Background: ________________________________________________________________________________

Skill sets (e.g. development, public policy/legislative advocacy, community organizing and experience with non-profits): ________________________________________________________________

II. PERSONAL STATEMENTS  Please save as a pdf, named with your last name and first initial, in this way: SmithT-nominee.pdf”

Note: Personal statements that are longer than the designated word count will be edited. Your responses will be included with the ballots sent to AED members in the Fall of 2020. They will also be circulated on AED’s website, in Diakoneo and in our online enewsletter Deacon Update.

1. How do you envision contributing to the AED Board? What are your special talents and gifts? (125 words)

2. What is your vision for the future of the Association for Episcopal Deacons? (250 words)

It is essential for the Nominee to have a thorough understanding of Board responsibilities before submitting a Nomination Form.

□ I have read and, if elected, agree to conscientiously perform the duties of a working member of the Association for Episcopal Deacons Board of Directors as referenced in the statement of the Board of Directors Responsibilities and Covenants.

Signed: ___________________________________________________________ Date: ____________________________

AED Board Open Positions

• Vice President/President-elect  (Must be a deacon)
• 1 Layperson
• 1 Presbyter
• 2 or 3 Deacons  (Depends on whether a current board member successfully runs for VP/President-elect. If so, their deacon position will be open.)

Terms for those elected will begin at the in-person Spring Board meeting, scheduled for either March 7-9, 2021 or March 14-16, 2021 at a location to be determined. Remaining meetings will be held remotely, via Zoom.

Only current members of AED are eligible to vote. If your membership has expired, please contact membership@episcopaldeacons.org before 10/12/20.

Ballots will be sent by email on 10/26/20 to all AED members for whom we have an email address. Those without email will be mailed paper ballots. You will only receive a ballot in one kind. Your email will be used ONLY for this election and not shared with any person or organization.
Term of Office
The term of office is four years. Directors may serve a maximum of 8 years.

Election Process
Directors are elected by the general membership ballot. Nominees’ Profiles are presented to AED’s full membership in various media. The President, with the approval of the Board, may appoint Directors to fill vacancies until the next election. In addition, up to three additional Board members may be appointed in this way to maximize diversity of talents and representation.

Time Commitment
A primary time commitment is attendance at a three-day board meeting in February or March each year. There are also quarterly conference call meetings lasting approximately 1.5 hours, additional budget-related conference calls in the fall, committee conference calls, and occasional special events, such as our Triennial Assembly and General Convention (which Board members are strongly encouraged to attend). Executive Committee members (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) make an additional commitment to attend an annual in-person meeting in late summer/fall. Service on a Committee or Task Force will also require a commitment of time, the amount of which will be determined by the task.

Committee, Task Force and Council Meetings
AED has task forces to meet time-limited needs. It also has standing committees (Finance, A3D Conference, Fundraising, Triennial, and General Convention), which serve long-term needs, and one standing advisory council (Vocational Development and Lifelong Learning). These groups include both Board members and non-Board members. They meet at the pleasure of their members in order to accomplish certain tasks by established deadlines. Attendance is essential.

Orientation Sessions
New Board members will be contacted shortly after their election to arrange a Board orientation session. This orientation will be done by phone. Participation is essential.

Fundraising and Membership Development
All Board members are expected to support fundraising efforts and planned giving campaigns. Board members are also expected to encourage their dioceses to become diocesan members, and to make an annual diocesan gift to AED. Board members are expected to encourage their diocesan diaconal community to become members.

Other Requirements
Board members are expected to be members of AED. Clerical members must be in good standing in their diocese of canonical residency. Bishop nominees must represent an AED member diocese.

Nomination Process
Nominees are sought broadly throughout the organization’s membership, through newsletter, journal, and website solicitations. The general membership, Board members, and Staff may invite prospective nominees to submit a Nominee Profile. Self-nomination is also appropriate. Prospects should receive and review this statement of Board Responsibilities and Covenants before accepting nomination. They are also invited to be in contact (by telephone, email, or in person) with a member of the Nominating Committee, if desired. The Nominee’s name then is placed on the ballot for election by the general membership at the next election. The Board may appoint up to three Board members to maximize diversity of talents and representation.

Approach to Governance
The Board’s role is to ensure that AED establishes and maintains the trust of the community by being clear in its mission, prudent and ethical in its activities, and accountable for its actions. Meetings focus on planning, policy-making, and assessing progress.

Mission
AED is an association of persons and dioceses within The Episcopal Church whose mission is to increase participation and involvement of all baptized persons in Christ’s diaconal ministry, especially by promoting and supporting the diaconate.

Directors’ Covenants
Our Board of Directors members affirm on their Nominee Profile that they will fulfill the following responsibilities and abide by the following code of conduct. Board Members will:

1. Pray for and promote the diaconate.
2. Pray for AED’s contractual staff, board members, and full membership.
3. Pray for the Episcopal Church and its ecumenical relationships.
4. Set policies and formulate plans in accordance with the Mission Statement of AED.
5. Attend or participate in all Board meetings, including conference call meetings. (Participate in e-mail or other social networking options in a timely manner.)
6. Select and support the contractual staff.
7. Consult with the President, the Executive Director, and other Board members with regard to the overall operations of committees.
8. Fulfill committee responsibilities assumed. If circumstances preclude fulfilling responsibilities assumed, inform the President or Executive Director.
9. Support AED through financial contributions (as one is able).
10. Encourage their diocese to become a diocesan member of AED, and encourage their deacon community members to join.
11. Avoid conflicts of interest, or the appearance of them, between the position as board member and the member’s personal and professional life.
12. Maintain the highest standards of financial responsibility in all money matters.
13. Maintain confidentiality as appropriate.
14. Be accountable to the membership and the community for competent, conscientious, and effective accomplishment of the obligations of the Board.

Vice President/President-Elect Covenant
- Serve as the face and voice of AED, in collaboration with the President, the Executive Director, and Board.
- Be responsible for calling the community together, in the absence of the President.
- Ensure that the Board of Directors fulfills its responsibilities (sets policy and establish direction, oversees the operational program, fulfills fiduciary responsibilities and serves as fundraisers), in collaboration with the President and Executive Director.
- Partner with the President and Executive Director to promote the vision and mission of AED.

VP Responsibilities
1. Hold the vision of AED before the Board, the membership, and the diaconal community, in collaboration with the President and the Executive Director.
2. Coordinate ways in which servant ministry and the diaconate will be promoted, in collaboration with the President and Executive Director.
3. Collaborate with the President, the Executive Director, and the Board to discern gifts and make board appointments.
4. Preside at meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and other appropriate committees, in the absence of the President.
5. Facilitate and maintain communication with the President among members of the Board and the Executive Committee.
6. Facilitate electronic voting, in the absence of the President.
7. Serve as Chair of the Nomination Committee.
8. Provide oversight of working committees (Request quarterly reports in anticipation of Board meetings and encourage activities.)
9. Be available for consultation for Board members, Executive Director, and staff in the absence of the President.
10. Represent AED as opportunities present themselves.
11. Fulfill other duties as necessary.

Questions? Contact Tracie Middleton at deacon.middleton@edfw.org.
Queer Diakonia: The Deacon’s Role in Helping
The Episcopal Church Welcome LGBTQ People of Faith

Excerpted from thesis submitted to CDSP, May 2019 by Deacon Ari Wolfe, MTS

BY DEACON ARI WOLFE

The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

~ Galatians 5:6 (NRSV)

I was talking with a friend of mine while we were in the process towards ordination. We were conjecturing about what church or parish each of us might be placed in for our field education; and while we were both looking forward to serving in a new place, my friend was also anxious about it. Their family is entirely, unapologetically and visibly queer in various ways, and they were concerned about where they would be placed and what kind of reception they would receive. While this has not been an issue in our sending parish or with the diocese in which we reside, the question of where and how they would be welcomed was still a real concern. Traditionally, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer (LGBTQ) people of faith often have difficulty and face challenges with organized religion. Many have experienced judgement, condemnation, and/or hostility from churches, religious leaders and other Christian people of faith; they have been excluded, made to feel unwelcome, or told that they have no place there. This ostracization can lead to LGBTQ+ people separating themselves from their congregations, denominations, or faith communities.

In March of 2018 Larry J. Bingham, the treasurer of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, wrote a brief guest commentary for the Kansas City Star, explaining the historical position of the Episcopal Church (TEC) in regards to LGBTQ people:

For more than 40 years the Episcopal Church has stood in support of the rights of gay and lesbian people and in more recent years has expanded that to include transgender people. This support for LGBT rights isn’t a political stance but a theological one, based in the knowledge that people are beloved children of God and worthy of respect.

It was one of the first Christian denominations to recognize in 1976 that “homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance and pastoral concern of the Church.” … At its next General Convention in 1979, the Episcopal Church declared that there is no barrier to the ordination of homosexual people.1

At TEC General Convention in 2018, Resolution B012 (Marriage Rites for the Whole Church) was passed, bringing the church’s policy into alignment with the 2015 federal ruling on marriage equality. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry says, “If it’s not about love, then it’s not about God.” Though it has come a long way, many of our congregations still struggle to fully accept and include LGBTQ people in the life of the community or to provide them with the spiritual and pastoral care they need. To live into our Baptismal Covenant, Episcopalians need to reach out to and invite LGBTQ people of faith into the full embrace of our congregations. As an openly bisexual woman and a newly ordained deacon, I have a more-than-academic interest in how full inclusion of LGBTQ people in the life of the church can be achieved and the role of Episcopal deacons in bringing this about.

So what - exactly - can congregations do to become more welcoming and supportive for LGBTQ+ people?

In Ministry Among God’s Queer Folk, David J. Kundtz and Bernard S. Schlager offer that there are “Three Basic Steps to Building a Community of Care for LGBTQ People: (1) Create a Genuine Welcome, (2) Integrate Queer People into the Life of a Congregation, (3) Build Alliances with Queer Communities outside the Congregation.”3

My own personal experience of genuine welcome as I was in my first parish brought me into the fold of the Episcopal Church, invited me to be baptized as a Christian, and later allowed me to answer a call to ordained ministry without the need to compromise who I am. The first thing that drew me was the explicit welcome stated on their website’s homepage:

No matter who you are or where you are on the spiritual journey, you are welcome here! We invite people looking for healing, love, forgiveness, and acceptance, and seeking to find or recover a spiritual home in Christian community, including families, children, young people, older people, couples, singles, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people… all who seek Christ are welcome at God’s table.4

The Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church has pioneered ways in which congregations can extend welcome to LGBTQ people.5 Their Welcoming Congregation Handbook offers a list of suggested actions that congregations might take to express their welcoming affirmation to LGBTQ people. This includes:

1. Offer a congregation-wide workshop program, with opportunities for study & reflection.
2. Use inclusive language and content as a regular part of worship services, and provide (clergy and other preachers) with guidelines on inclusive language.
3. Welcome (LGBTQ) persons in the congregation’s brochure
4. Celebrate & affirm bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender issues and history during the church year.

Ministry Among God’s Queer Folk lists ways in which congregations can become LGBTQ allies, including:

1. Find opportunities to educate your local community about religion and queer people.
2. Find ways to work with PFLAG (Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays), GLSEN (the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network), your local LGBTQ community center and other organizations.
3. Host a weekend workshop or retreat.
4. When the civil rights of queer people are being threatened, speak up!
5. Offer space in your building (at low or no cost) for local queer-friendly organizations.
6. Celebrate/mark LGBTQ cultural events… consider marching in the local gay pride parade or hosting inter-religious services that are open to members of the local community.

Jesus taught, unequivocally, that we are to be guided in all that we do by love: love for God, love for ourselves and love for our neighbors; and that everyone is our “neighbor.” Baptized Christians both lay and ordained

Continued on page 12
A spiritual resurgence at Standing Rock

BY DEACON SLOANE FLOBERG

February 27, 2020

Most of the general population has either heard or read about the typical statistics and living situations that encompass many of the reservations that span across the United States. Many know the stereotypes and stigmas associated with indigenous peoples – especially with our many sports teams and proverbial “Tomahawk Chop.” Many of the beautiful people who live on those reservations would give you reason for awe and wonder, and all would probably still give you a picture of the devastating generational effects that still linger after white settlers came here to chase the American Dream. Many do not understand why any of this should still matter anymore, after all – that’s all in the past, right?

Where I currently live in Bismarck, the capital of North Dakota, news traveled by Steamboat that General George Armstrong Custer was defeated at the battle of the Little Big Horn some 144 years ago. The deep and often dark history that flows through this land like the oil many have been striving to pull up, is as present as ever and is shrouded underneath many a thin veiled “smile” from those in this community as people from Standing Rock travel to Bismarck-Mandan to do a majority of their business and shopping.

Many students have shared with me how they do not like coming up to Bismarck due to the tension they feel – whether it is in the stores where they feel constantly being watched by employees or other people shopping, to the waitresses not giving their families service with a smile – the deep wounds of the past have continued to show in today’s generation of teens on the reservation. Even if there is more opportunity in the bigger city of Bismarck for a “better life” as some would see it, many students I work with believe the reservation life is safer, more manageable and somewhat predictable – even if it may mean they are homeless, jobless, living around addiction and dealing with issues of abuse. Despite the stereotypical reservation lifestyle some attribute to the students I work with, there is energy, creativity and purpose arising. I would even dare say hope. Since the NODAPL movement of 2016 (No Dakota Access Pipeline), we have seen a great spiritual resurgence on Standing Rock from many tribal members who have taken great strides in the healing of their people and communities from years of generational trauma. Many in the church are willing to play a part in the healing process as well, but even well-intentioned congregations need to know their history and where they have played a part in that trauma before they even begin.

Many attempting to be a part of the healing process also need to familiarize themselves with terms such as “Generational Trauma” and many studies involving “ACES” (Adverse Childhood Experiences) as this is what the American Dream left in the dust for our indigenous brothers and sisters in Christ to sort through. Many studies that are out there today suggest that traumatic events of the “past” have even been etched into the DNA of those affected by it and will take a lot of time and intention to heal. My husband and I are going on close to 30 years of ministry with our brothers and sisters of Standing Rock. While living in Fort Yates for 12 of those years gave me such an appreciation for the people, their history and spirituality, living in Bismarck (some 60 miles away) so that my husband could help serve as Canon Missioner on other reservations and the Sudanese population in North Dakota was a change for sure. After the NODAPL movement of 2016, it opened my eyes to the deep resentment that is still being harbored to this day in the Bismarck-Mandan communities: one generation after another. The blatant disregard and disrespect for my brothers and sisters of Christ on the reservation was widely publicized on many Facebook pages and it left me heartbroken for the people I have been so honored to call family.

For those of you who do not know, Standing Rock straddles the North and South Dakota border, with the biggest part of land mass in South Dakota. The “hub” is located in Fort Yates, where the Tribal Administrative offices are. The Episcopal Church in which I serve has three parishes on the North Dakota side of the reservation that are roughly 20 miles apart from each other. A typical week serving on Standing Rock involves a lot of windshield time, prayer and of course, lots of music!

Every Sunday begins with a 40 mile trek to St. James’ Episcopal Church in Cannonball, North Dakota, where I serve as Deacon and provide communion by reserve sacrament every other week. On the other weeks, my husband, who is the Rector, serves with me and then offers a later service time for the other two congregations. Following service and fellowship hour, we transform the nave and sanctuary into a place for over 70 teens to hang out on Wednesday night during our Young Life Youth Group. Young Life is an interdenominational program we have been partnering with for the past 17 years and serves youth all over the world in an effort to reach all with the exciting, never boring, Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because Deacons are required to wear many hats in order to help congregations see the needs of their communities, along with being a Deacon, I am a youth minister and licensed professional counselor. On Monday, if I have students at Standing Rock Community High School who want a counseling session, I will drive 60 miles to Fort Yates and go to the school and pick up each student one by one and either drive around town and walk or take them to my office at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church for a pop and chips as we contemplate life. Around 5pm, I will drive an additional 30 miles to St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in McLaughlin, SD to help prepare and serve supper in an effort to help my eldest son, Isaiah and fellow Young Life staff, Chaska Moore, who are heading up a very new Young Life Youth Group down there. I usually get home to catch the evening news. Tuesdays and Thursdays have become the days I reserve for paperwork, meetings, reaching out to our Youth Group who are heading up a very new Young Life Youth Group down there. I usually get home to catch the evening news. Tuesdays and Thursdays have become the days I reserve for paperwork, meetings, reaching out to our donors, shopping for youth group items or doing what we call “contact time.” This could be taking students out for fries and a pop, going for a drive, sitting by the river or watching students perform in a school concert, art show or sports.

On Wednesday, I load my car up with pop, food and prizes and head to the high school in Solen, ND which is roughly 17 miles from where we have Youth Group in Cannonball. Solen high school has been very supportive of my ministry with the students there and usually has a list of students who want to talk to me. Following the dismissal of students to their buses, I usually hob-nob with the principal and secretary for a bit or I may visit some parishioners who live in town and then drive the 17 miles over to Cannonball in order to prepare supper for Youth Group later that night.

Our Young Life Youth Group is called a “party with a purpose” and at times “organized chaos.” It is a way for those who are probably not even Continued on page 12
remotely interested in this “God thing” to be comfortable with just being in the church, playing games, singing songs they know on the radio and introducing them to this man we call Jesus. I help both our student and adult leaders take ownership of the youth group program and use their gifts and talents for His glory. My primary job as youth minister I have always believed is to technically work myself out of a job. If I can teach others how to be Jesus with skin on and love our students with the same kind of love Jesus showed me when I was a struggling adolescent, then I believe I have done well. Some members from our congregations help to prepare meals when they can, and at times we receive monetary donations to buy food for me to prepare as well. Each meal costs roughly $150 every week.

While the students trickle in around 6:30pm, I will greet them by name with a hug or an “I see you” nod and then some will come up to me and want to talk about their week. I help serve supper and then when everyone is served I will grab a plate and mill around the church talking with students. Once supper concludes, tables are picked up and chairs get rearranged for big group games, singing and a spiritual talk. The last two years, I helped to lead live worship during youth group but this year we lost our bass guitarist and have yet to fill his spot so for now it’s singing with YouTube, which the students don’t mind. I would be lying if I told you I didn’t miss my guitar strumming and ability to engage the students in worship of their heavenly Father such as this but to be in this field, you need to be flexible and just roll with it.

Our youth group lasts for two hours and usually ends in prayer and/ or smudging with sage. It is amazing how it calms many a student leaving our building. After the students leave with most of our leaders to be transported home, I sweep, mop and do dishes with my youngest 16-year-old son while he rearranges the chairs back to being worship ready on Sunday. Friday I am back in my car for the 60 mile trek down to Fort Yates for what we call Campaigner’s, which is a senior high bible study we have for those students wanting to dig a little deeper in their relationship with Christ. We break bread (usually pizza) and study God’s word until 8:30-9:00pm. Saturdays are spent getting the house back in order and some much needed R&R.

In the spring, our family along with the youth group leadership spend a lot of time at our camp getting it ready for the summer months to host mission groups and to help lead three summer camps. During free time of camp, I am available for students to talk with and ultimately do my best with Jesus’ help to provide hope and healing. Studies have shown for years that if a student has just one positive person in their life, the odds of that student succeeding in life dramatically increases. I want to be that adult because I had many from the church in my life that made all the difference for me.

I came into this ministry thinking I could do this gig and still have a normal life and family. My family and what we do is not what my normal was defined as by any means, but my normal is by far the best gift I could have ever received from Jesus. It took some time convincing me and I struggled watching others in their lives, but Jesus knows our hearts so much better than ourselves, doesn’t He?

While normal would have been “okay” in the grand scheme of things, it wouldn’t have fed the ache my soul felt for the students I have been so honored to know and love along the way. While struggling to find “normalcy” and “tradition” in our home, one of the things that continued to surface was that all of our children have had the privilege to minister in the church and build a solid foundation for others at St. Gabriel’s Camp. The memories being shared around the dinner table of “remember when” followed by laughter and smiles has made all the difference for me. It warms my heart when my sons have a hard time sleeping at night because they can’t wait to get out to the camp again to work and play. I always wanted to make a difference growing up. I wanted to follow Jesus. I wanted a family and a job helping others. I wanted to give back because a community of believers invested their time and talents in this one little seed. In some way, I hope I have and at least made a change in someone else’s life to follow Jesus. That’s all we could ever hope for, and hope does not disappoint.

Sloane Floberg is the direct ministry support staff for Young Life, and deacon with the Standing Rock Episcopal Community in North Dakota. During the beginning stages of the coronavirus outbreak, youth ministry leaders were on the forefront helping to pack and deliver meals to school students. As of late March, they’ve been providing online church services, devotionals and ‘check in’ messages to students “just to let them know we haven’t forgotten about them and are praying for them — especially those who may be struggling in their homes, are depressed or suicidal.”

Queer Diakonia, from page 10

are called to be ambassadors of faith, letting others know that they are not alone, that they are loved by God, seen by the church and invited in with open arms and open hearts; that they are truly welcome, and that we all stand with them. Episcopal deacons are in a unique position to lead congregations in this work and to encourage all the Body of Christ to participate in providing deep, authentic, lasting and healing welcome from a place of love and compassion. I hope you will join me!

Ari Wolfe is a deacon in the Diocese of California. Her full master’s thesis can be found at deaconjourney.com. Additional LGBTQ+ resources are at deaconjourney.com/lgbtq.

html. Emphasis added. In 2012, thanks to the work of the TransEpiscopal group, “the canons of The Episcopal Church were amended to prohibit discrimination in the ordination process based on gender identity and gender expression.” (Episcopalchurch.org/lgbtq/history).


David Kandtz and Bernard Sloan Schlager, Ministry among God’s Queer Folk: LGBT Pastoral Care (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2007), 161.

Welcome to All Souls!,” All Souls Parish, accessed April 18, 2019, http://www.allsoulsparish.org/. I have seen several variations of this statement in use on other Episcopal Church websites.


RESPONSE to Chapter XLIII, from February 2020

Filling a vacuum

BY DEACON KEITH MCCOY

Deacons are called to “stir the pot”. We are to mix things up, not out of malice, but out of our calling “to serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely.” The world will churn on in its own way for its own benefit. Someone needs to speak out for those who can’t speak, and help to change the world’s usual self-centered path on their behalf.

Which means presenting ideas that get people to see beyond the norm. That is just what Dn. Scott McTavish did in our last chapter. In that story, the clergy and vestry of Grace-on-the-Mount in Cape Monte had gathered at the rectory for a congratulatory party. A million dollar project had been completed ahead of schedule, and without dipping into savings. One of the wardens asked what the next challenge would be, and various decorative projects were suggested. The deacon stepped forward to suggest that the parish property be rearranged so as to be able to house a refugee family. Discussion ensued, as they say.

There’s a management maxim which runs: don’t just bring me problems, bring me solutions, too. So, it’s not enough to point out that there are hungry people in the community, without suggesting how that issue could be responded to. It’s admirable to dedicate one’s time to visiting the sick, but if it’s not sustainable past your particular time on earth, what happens to the sick then. How will that ministry continue, beyond yourself? How can we deal with the usual, differently?

Deacons can provide an alternative vision for connecting problems with resources. For example, people needing housing over here, lots of empty space over there: how about doing X or Y? An after-school program with more kids than adults, a new retiree with time on her hands: let’s get together and talk. It is not necessarily about connecting A with B, but about seeing a variety of ways that A and B are related and should move forward together.

It’s not always about money, either, and it’s not always about what the deacon can do personally. It’s about the possibilities. I’ve occasionally likened myself (in terms of looking at new ways to deliver services) to a cat burglar who rattles any number of doorknobs until I find one that is unlocked, and then I can go through that door. The deacon can look around, suggest a variety of options, and then nudge people in the direction that they seem inclined to. The key is to find a way, not just a particular way.

The great Irish writer George Bernard Shaw, in his play “In the Beginning, B.C. 4004”, has the serpent say to Eve, “You see things; and you say ‘Why?’ But I dream things that never were; and I say ‘Why not?”’

That can be the deacon’s role in the church, to get people to dream beyond themselves and consider the ‘why not’. It can be as simple as asking why there is no space for wheelchairs in the nave, or as complex as suggesting a major fundraising project to meet a community need. Deacons are in a place where they can see things, and still ask: why not? We should use that gift from God more than we do.

NEW: Chapter XLIV

Foredeacons

BY DEACON KEITH MCCOY

Henrietta Richards was a quintessential deacon.¹ Henna to her friends, Mrs. or Deacon Richards to the rest, she was a woman of immense sensibility, which, coupled with her finely tuned BS meter, made her the go-to person for guidance and advice wherever she was. Her long years as the welfare director in Highland, followed by her service as the deacon at St. Augustine’s in that same town, caused her to be revered by many. Deacon Henna was well known as a Wise Woman of the community.

A few years ago, when she was in her mid-seventies, a bout with the flu sapped her strength, and she never really recovered her health after that. She skipped a few services during Holy Week last year, and by Christmas, she had to read the gospel from a wheelchair. Not long into the new year, she caught another cold, which turned into pneumonia, and, after a few days in the ICU, the Rev. Henrietta Richards went to her glory, full of years.

Her funeral, at St. Augustine’s, was a few days before the annual Deacons Day with the Bishop. For that latter gathering at the Cathedral, the day began with Eucharist, followed by the ubiquitous coffee and pastries, and then by an “open mic” session with Bp. Strozzapreti. He started by remembering Deacon Henna and talked about what her ministry had meant to her community and to the wider church.

When he finished, there was a moment of silence, and then Deacon Joyce Chukwu said, “I never knew her. I wish I had.” The other new deacons all agreed on that. A few of the slightly more senior deacons concurred.

“She was among the first deacons in the diocese,” offered Ned Holmquist, but former archdeacon Melanie Spunk corrected him.

“Actually, she wasn’t - she was ordained about 2004, after I was. First there was Jimmie Hayes, who was ordained under Bp. Frost back in 1980, but he didn’t function as a deacon for very long. Eleanor Prescott was the first really active deacon in this diocese, along with

Continued on page 14
AED Board Report

BY BRADLEY PETERSON, SECRETARY

March 30, 2020

The Board met in February, via Zoom, to review and approve the budget for 2020 as proposed by the Finance Committee. The board expressed deep thanks to treasurer Ed Richards and board member Phyllis Jones for their dedicated work in bringing AED’s bookkeeping and budgeting up to date.

The annual in-person board meeting was held March 8 -10 in Jacksonville, Florida. Over the course of that meeting the board…

• Reviewed the next steps for the Finance Committee, including development of an investment policy to balance risk and social responsibility, and engagement of a money manager to oversee AED’s investment goals;

• Scheduled AED Board elections to be held October 26 - November 23, 2020, and convened a Nominating Committee for the 2020 elections consisting of Tracie Middleton, Maureen Hagen, Kate Harrigan, Chris McCloud, and Lori Mills-Curran;

• Approved a request from the Association of Anglican Deacons in Canada (AADC) to change the transfer of funds to Canadian dollars, and discussed means of strengthening ties between AED and AADC;

• Received a report on The Fund for the Diaconate’s grants to deacons in need and noted the need to submit applications to the Fund at least a month before one of the Fund’s board meetings in a given year;

• Reviewed the schedule proposed by the Joint Development Task Force of AED and the Fund for the Diaconate, together with The Cornerstone Group, and affirmed its support of that schedule;

• Made it board policy that the Board itself would review any position AED would take on legislation proposed for General Convention, and convened an ad hoc legislative task force consisting of Jan Grinnell, Kate Harrigan, and Maureen Hagen, and asked them to bring recommendations to the board for its consideration and action;

• Asked board members Jan Grinnell and Chris McCloud to check with the deacons in the diocese of Maryland about a potential service action at General Convention 2021;

• Discussed widely ongoing work on defining membership categories, memberships for deacons from other denominations, the current joint memberships for Canadian deacons, graduated memberships, membership benefits, methods for payment for membership, and the role of revenue production of memberships and events;

• Reviewed AED’s strategic plan, noting tasks accomplished or outdated, assigning outstanding tasks to board members or committees, and directing the Executive Committee to develop a proposal for a Social Justice Committee for consideration at the board’s June 2020 meeting, and

• Authorized the Executive Committee to communicate with AED’s membership as the Coronavirus emergency unfolds.

Diocese of St. Ives, from page 13

being the first archdeacon. She retired here from New Jersey, met Bishop de Granite shortly before his consecration, and convinced him to start our diaconate formation program.”

A few people remembered Archdeacon Prescott, who had re-retired almost fifteen years before. She, too, had died not long ago, at the age of 99; many had not been aware of that. No one had heard of Hayes, almost fifteen years before. She, too, had died not long ago, at the age to start our diaconate formation program.”

“Let us get going before we lose any more of our living history. And how should we get going?”

“I realize I’m the newest one here, and I’m glad to know there is a list of deacons. But,” and she looked around, “we’re not all here. Who is missing?”

A couple of names got shouted out, some with reasons. Chukwu pointed out, “That’s only 28.” People looked around, trying to figure out who was the unaccounted-for deacon, but they failed.

The bishop glanced at the wall clock. “This has been an interesting discussion, but I have some other things I want to talk over with you. How about I appoint a task force of deacons to look into this, and connect them with the diocesan archivist. That will help you collect the names, and then you can start on collecting the stories.”

Everyone agreed to that. But the newest deacon had the last word: “Let us get going before we lose any more of our living history. And how should we get going?”

1Introduced in 2008 in Chapter 7, “One Door Opens”

2“The Lost Sheepdog”, Chapter 23, February 2015

What would you do? Please send responses with your take on this article to kmccoy1@optonline.net. Comments received within a month will be taken into consideration when writing the response.

Keith McCoy has twenty plus years as a deacon and manager of public agencies. He serves in the Diocese of New Jersey.
MEMBERSHIP IN AED

Join others in supporting diaconal ministry

Planned Giving
To support the work of deacons through estate planning or with a major gift, please contact The Fund for the Diaconate at www.fundfordiaconate.org. AED and the Fund are sister organizations, working together on a variety of activities to support deacons.

JOIN OR DONATE
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Westborough, MA 01581-651

Yes, I support the work of AED!
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Birth date: (if deacon or in formation) ____/ ____/ ______
Ordination date: (if deacon) ____/ ____/ ______
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AED MEMBERSHIP MAKES THIS NEWSLETTER POSSIBLE. THANK YOU!

IN MEMORIAM
Deacon deaths are listed alphabetically by name, date of death, diocese, age and year ordained. Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

Mary Hartwell Brown, 3/6/2020, Maryland, 94, 1989
John E. Derbyshire, 2/2/2020, Central New York, 92, 1989
Gwendolyn J. Dillon, 1/6/2020, Chicago, 93, 1989
Carla V. Hungate, 3/13/2020, Atlanta, 65, 1995
Paul P. Jackson, 12/25/2019, Central Florida, 98, 1975
Sybil Adlyn Meheux, 1/31/2020, Central Florida, 86, 1998
Iris E. Mello, 1/18/2020, Rhode Island, 80, 1985
Marcia Rauls Onkka, 4/24/2019, Minnesota, 93, 1990
Henry Andrews Penner, 12/20/2019, Fort Worth, 73, 2012
Marilyn Lindeberg Powell, 12/16/2019, South Carolina, 95, 1985
Barbara Allen Koucky Ramnaraine, 10/27/2019, Minnesota, 85, 1984
George H. Smodell, 3/14/2020, Central Florida, 92, 1989
Anne Polhemus Vellom, 12/16/2019, Arizona, 87, 1989
Elizabeth (Lanny) Wenthe, 2/19/2020, Maine, 78, 2013

Notices are listed as we receive them. Every effort has been made to provide accurate information and we regret any errors. Please send notifications, including diocese, date of ordination, age and date of death to membership@episcopaldeacons.org.
Newly Ordained

Congratulations new Deacons!

We celebrate the following Vocational Deacon ordinations that have been reported to AED. Ordinations are published as we receive them. Please send ordination notices to membership@episcopaldeacons.org.

12/12/2019 Indianapolis William R. Morris
12/21/2019 Pittsburgh Geoffrey Swenson Royce
1/4/2020 North Carolina Emily Parker, Wendy Merrill
1/11/2020 New Hampshire Steve Ekerberg
1/25/2020 Fond du Lac Lisa Marie Ueda
1/27/2020 Central Florida Steven Heisler
2/6/2020 Utah Alison Desiderio Peterson
3/7/20 Western Mass. Jason Burns

We love to include ordination photos, as space allows. Photos reproduce best at 1 MB (1,000 KB) or larger. Occasionally small photos are used, shown at actual size. Please send photos to communications@episcopaldeacons.org.


Transitional and vocational deacons:
Row 1: Beth Hall (T), Jennifer Grady (T), Row 2: Steven Heisler (V), Jose Daniel Pinell (T), Joe Denton (T) with Bishop Greg Brewer. 1/27/20. Central Florida.

Alison Peterson, right. 2/6/20. Utah.

Kevin Antonio, transitional, Bishop Douglas Fisher, Jason Burns, vocational. 3/7/20. Western Massachusetts.